



# Administrative Office of the Courts

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## Child Witness Pilot Project in the Penobscot Judicial Center

Jan. 4, 2015. Portland, Maine. For immediate release. The Chief Justice of the Superior Court and the Chief Judge of the District Court have authorized a pilot project in the Penobscot Judicial Center to permit the taking of testimony of a child witness by simultaneous video transmission in certain types of civil cases, when it is consistent with due process. Starting on November 24, 2014, the process shall be as follows:

Rule 43 M.R.Civ.P. permits the court to authorize contemporaneous video testimony from a remote location. On motion of either party, or the court's own motion, the court may authorize the taking of testimony of a child witness from a remote location in the Penobscot Judicial Center. If both parties are represented by counsel, attorneys may be present in the room with the child. If neither party, or only one party, is represented by counsel, the child witness will be in a remote location with the judge, and the parties and counsel will question the witness by a video link, unless the parties have agreed on some other process that has been approved by the court.

During the pilot, technical equipment will be installed as designated by the presiding jurist. The equipment will be positioned so that the child witness, and the judge can be seen and heard on a video monitor in the courtroom. A video monitor in the room with the child witness will permit the judge to see the litigants in the courtroom. All persons in the remote location will be able to hear those in the courtroom. The audio of the testimony will be electronically recorded, but there will be no video recording.

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